(b) the outcome of cases registered against Rakesh Kumar and Daler Mehandi:

(c) the role and performance of the Protector of Emigrants to check illegal export of manpower from India; and

(d) the steps Government propose to take to check racket of Kabootarbaji?

THE MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI): (a) to (d) Information is being collected and will be laid on the table of the house.

Registration of NRI marriages

1913. DR. GYAN PRAKASH PILANIA: Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Standing Committee on External Affairs has recommended that registration of NRI marriages be made compulsory and stringent action be taken against corrupt Protectorate of Emigrants offices (PoE) and fraudulent recruiting agents;

(b) if so, the follow up action thereon;

(c) the statistics pertaining to incidents of failed and fraudulent marriages of Indian women with NRIs; and

(d) the number of Indian workers in Middle-East and South-East countries and scenario of their exploitation and harassment?

THE MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) On the issue of compulsory registration of marriages the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs (MOIA) has drawn the attention of all the States/UTs to a recent judgement of the Hon'ble Supreme Court in the matter and requested them to make relevant laws for the same.

MOIA has taken various steps to improve the emigration process and make it more transparent which include upgradation of 3 posts of Protector of Emigrants (PoE) to Deputy Secretary level, conducting periodic vigilance audit of POE offices, computerization of offices of the Protector General of Emigrants (PGE) and PoEs, initiation of disciplinary proceedings against PoE officials found involved in corrupt practices and rationalization of procedure for processing of fresh applications and renewal of licenses of recruiting agents.

(c) The Ministry has received about 168 cases relating to failed and fraudulent marriages with overseas Indian spouses.

(d) The number of Indian Workers in the Middle-East and South-East countries is estimated at about five million.

The main problems faced by Indian emigrant workers in foreign countries relate to:

(i) non-payment/reduced/delayed payment of salaries,

(ii) non deployment on promised jobs,

(iii) adverse working conditions,

(iv) denial of appropriate medical facilities,

(v) poor living conditions, etc.

Women marrying NRIs

1914. SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN: Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to enact a law to protect women marrying Non-Resident Indians;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI): (a) to (c) No Sir, there is no proposal under consideration to enact a separate legislation to protect the women marrying NRIs. However, a proposal to enact a suitable legislation relating to compulsory registration of marriages is under consideration of the Ministry of Law and Justice (Legislative Department).

Corruption in Panchayats

1915. MS. MABEL REBELLO: Will the Minister of PANCHAYATI RAJ be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware that Sarpanchs and the Gram Sewaks/ Panchayat Secretary are indulging in wholesale corruption in implementation of various schemes of Government such as road construction, NREGA, and many other development works;

(b) in what manner Government propose to motivate the Sarpanchs who work truly for the development of the area; and

(c) in what manner Gcvemment would motivate the State Governments to hold Panchayat elections in States like Jharkhand where Panchayat elections have not been held for the last couple of decades?

THE MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) In view of the provisions of Article 243G of the Constitution, the processes of endowing the Panchayats and their Presidents with powers and authority has been entrusted to State Legislatures and the State executive. This would include monitoring and correcting the work of the Village Panchayat President and officers working with the Village Panchayat. As far as NREGA and other schemes of the Ministry of Rural Development are concerned, District Vigilance and Monitoring Committees have been established under the chairpersonship of Members of Parliament.